

Services Administration allocate 15 percent of new expenditures to enterprise zones, to distressed areas, to have Federal buildings constructed, with the priority in cities where there are depressed areas to provide jobs in those areas, and to reinstitute certain historical tax breaks which could be of great benefit for the cities.

#### ADDITIONAL ALLOCATION FOR NIH

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, a third legislative matter is a resolution calling for the Budget Committee to allocate an additional \$2 billion to the health account to be used for the National Institutes of Health, being offered on behalf of myself and Senator HARKIN in our continuing effort to see to it that additional funds are allocated for the National Institutes of Health, which is really the crown jewel of the Federal Government. In fact, Mr. President, it may be the only jewel in the Federal Government. We understand that the allocation in health is to a category, but the funds are very, very limited on our subcommittee.

Last year, Senator HARKIN, ranking, and I as chairman, were able to take the lead in some \$2 billion to NIH, but it was at the expense of other programs which were very, very important for worker safety, for education programs, for other health programs. We are committing this resolution with that specific request to the Budget Committee.

#### STEEL INDUSTRY RELIEF

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, tomorrow legislation will be introduced by a coalition of bipartisan Senators—Democrats and Republicans—to bring some relief to the steel industry. The steel industry has been very, very hard hit in America. In the past two decades, steel jobs have declined from some 500,000 to about 150,000. Billions of dollars have been invested in the steel industry, and we have had a surge of dumped steel—that is, steel which is sold in the United States at a lower price than it is sold in the country of origin. Russia, with their economy in great distress, will sell steel at any price in the United States to get dollars. A similar problem has evolved, too, in Japan, Korea, Indonesia and other countries.

The Senate Steel Caucus, both on the House side and the Senate side, has held hearings. Senator ROCKEFELLER, vice chairman of the Steel Caucus, and I, in my capacity as chairman, will be introducing the legislation tomorrow with many Senators in support—Senator BYRD, Senator SANTORUM, and many others—as well as representatives of the steelworkers union and the steel industry themselves. On the House side, Representative REGULA of Ohio, who chairs the House Steel Caucus, will be joining us in this legislative introduction.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

#### ANNUAL STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this is indeed a strange day on Capitol Hill—January 19, 1999—and I am sure that history will look back on this day as one of stark contrast. It is a day when the President will deliver his State of the Union Address, and of course that is a historic ritual which began with President Wilson and will continue with President Clinton this evening.

The oddity, of course, is that some of the same Members of the House of Representatives who over the span of the last week have stood on the floor of this Senate Chamber and at various times described the President as being “corrupt” or “felonious,” as being “one who has turned his back on the law” will be, tonight, in the House Chamber applauding this President as he comes to the floor.

Many people might view this as somewhat hypocritical. I do not. I think it reflects two basic values in American life: The first and most important is a presumption of innocence, a presumption which is extended to every person when they are accused by their accusers, be it government or otherwise, until proven otherwise.

Today, there is a suggestion that we will hear for the first time the defense of the President and hear the other side of the story. That presumption of innocence, I think, argues that all of us come to the State of the Union Address tonight with an open mind to the issues at hand, serious issues facing the country.

The second and equally important value that will be tested this evening is one which I have seen in my time on Capitol Hill tested time and time again. I can certainly recall at the height of the Iran-contra affair when President Reagan came to give a State of the Union Address. I had very serious concerns about the Iran-contra affair, the sale of arms to an avowed enemy of the United States, the diversion of proceeds from that sale to contras, rebels, in Nicaragua, in direct violation of the law, and all of that proceeding and all of that controversy which led to the eventual prosecution of members of the President's Cabinet.

In the midst of that was a State of the Union Address by President Reagan. Many of us who were critical of the Iran-contra affair came to that State of the Union Address and gave appropriate respect to the President in his presentation to Congress and to the American people.

I expect the same thing to occur tonight. And I expect that what we have heard this morning on the floor from the Democratic side about the agenda

that we are hoping to propose and push forward during the coming months will be addressed by the President in his speech. At this point, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMAS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming is recognized.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for seven minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Did the Senator request a period of time?

Mr. THOMAS. Seven minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized for 7 minutes.

(The remarks of Mr. THOMAS pertaining to the introduction of the legislation are located in today's RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Mr. ROBB addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. ROBB pertaining to the introduction of the legislation are located in today's RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Ms. COLLINS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine is recognized.

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of the legislation are located in today's RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Ms. COLLINS. I thank the Chair. I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ENZI). The clerk will call the roll to determine the absence of presence of a quorum.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DEWINE. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. DEWINE pertaining to the introduction of S. 5 and S. 61 are located in today's RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I am pleased that we are finally getting to introduce bills today. This is, of

course, the first day that we have had that option. I want to talk about the legislative priorities of the majority party in Congress as well as several of the bills that I will be introducing that I believe reflect those priorities.

The leadership of the majority in Congress has just had a press conference talking about the opportunity and the security that we are going to provide with our major bills and priorities this session. We are talking about Social Security reform, trying to make sure we have the security for those who have retired. We are going to add to that pension reform to give more Americans the opportunity to add to that Social Security base. Social Security is supposed to be a base, but every American ought to be adding savings, tax free, as an incentive to have retirement security.

We are going to address education as an opportunity, making sure that every child in America has a chance to succeed with a public education. By that, we are going to give more choices. I will introduce today a bill that I call Options for Excellence in Education, to try to replace the paperwork and bureaucracy of federal education programs with rewards for innovation, excellence, and choice.

In a bill that I will introduce today, the Options for Excellence in Education Act, we are going to give incentive grants to states and school districts that demonstrate exceptional educational progress and practices that translate directly into better student performance. The bill will also build upon a very successful program to place military veterans who wish to teach into schools where there is a need for qualified teachers by expanding the concept to include civilian professionals. Under the program, individuals with special skills and experience will be given stipend while they seek teacher certification under a streamlined state process so that they can translate those skills into benefits for students. We are going to give help to expedite certification so that if a retired military or civilian professional has the ability, for example, to speak Russian or French or has experience in computer science or math, and the school district has an unmet need for teachers with those skills, those professionals can enter the classroom much more easily and cheaply than they could otherwise.

And then we want to grade the ability of the schools through the ability of the children. If those schools that are in the bottom part of the achievement levels don't come up, we want to give more educational options for their students. States will be able under the bill to use federal funds for a variety of school choice options, including allowing students to attend another public school in their area, the expansion of charter schools, magnet schools, or

even private school choice if that's what the state wants to do to give kids trapped in failed schools the chance to succeed.

Finally, the bill addresses the need for the construction of new schools that so many of our school districts are facing by giving tax incentives for the private construction or renovation of public schools in low-income and high-growth parts of our country. So that is what my Options for Excellence in Education bill that I am introducing today will do.

We in Congress must also address the issue of economic opportunity. More people in this country are paying more taxes than ever before in our peacetime history. Thirty-eight percent of the average American's salary goes to pay taxes to some government entity. Well, I want to give more of the money people earn back to them to spend as they wish. So one of our key priorities is going to be tax cuts. We are going to propose a 10-percent across-the-board tax cut for every American.

We are also going to supplement that by doing away with the marriage tax penalty. Why in the world do we have tax laws that say to people, if you get divorced we are going to give you \$1,400? That is essentially what we have today. Twenty-one million American couples pay \$1,400 more, on the average, just because they got married.

So I am introducing two bills today to grant marriage tax penalty relief. The first will allow a married couple to split their incomes right down the middle, if doing so would be better for their bottom line tax liability.

The other option for married couples I am proposing to alleviate their tax penalty for having said their vows to just double the standard deduction. Today, the standard deduction for a married couple is \$7,100. Instead, we would double the single exemption so it would be \$8,500. These are things we can do to equalize the tax burden for those who choose to be married and those who choose to stay single. So certainly in the area of economic opportunity, tax cuts have to be our very first priority.

So we are going to try to do these things and also at the same time make sure that we have a strong national defense. Security for our country as a whole is the No. 1 responsibility of Congress. So we are going to immediately propose legislation to raise military pay.

I will also soon introduce a bill that will go beyond the important issue of pay, and address one of the critical quality of life factors facing our service men and women and their dependents—the quality of health care for military personnel and retirees. One of the biggest complaints that I get when I visit bases in Texas or bases overseas, when I am talking to our troops, is they worry about the health care of

their families. They worry that their families are not getting the quality health care that they were promised, that they deserve, and that they must have. Beyond that, they worry about what will happen to their health care and that of their families if they make a long-term commitment and retire from the military.

So I am introducing a bill that will give more choices to our military families so that they can receive quality health care for themselves, and for their families, so that we can retain the best people in the military. We need to recruit better; we need to retain better. To do that, we must pay them a wage that is fair, more competitive with the outside civilian life, and we need to make sure they and their families have quality health care.

On top of that, we want to give them the equipment they need to do the job.

Senator WARNER, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, is going to have a comprehensive bill that increases the spending on the equipment and on the technology for the future. The main technology that we want to deploy immediately is a missile defense system for our country. Senator THAD COCHRAN has introduced a missile defense technology bill in this Congress. Last year, he lost that bill twice by only one vote. He is going to be up front and center with an absolute priority for our missile defense technology, to go forward at the earliest moment that we can because we don't have a ballistic missile defense not only for our own country and our own shores, but we don't have an effective missile defense for our troops to protect them in the field wherever they might be in the world. That is not acceptable for the world's greatest superpower.

Mr. President, you can see that our priorities for this Congress are fairly simple: enhance the security and expand the educational and economic opportunities of all Americans. Security and opportunity. Security for America through a strong national defense. Economic security for every American to have more of the money they work so hard to earn, to give them more opportunities for retirement security, for better Social Security, and more pension options, and economic opportunity so that every child in America can fulfill his or her potential with a quality education. That is what sets us apart from every other country in the world—a universal, quality education system, which ensures that every child who works hard can reach his or her full potential.

We are eager to move forward with this agenda for security and opportunity for our country. We believe we have a solid agenda with good bills to back it up. And we are starting today. We are going to focus on the people's business. We are going to make sure

that at the end of this year we can say we have given more Americans the money they earn back in their pockets, better retirement security with Social Security reform, and the feeling that they can be secure in the quality of both their national defense and educational systems.

I appreciate very much the opportunity to start talking about our agenda today, to introduce our bills, to get them into committee and to get started on the people's business.

#### SENATE REPUBLICAN LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, in recent weeks, I have made clear that the Senate would proceed, full speed ahead, with the people's business. Today's legislative action is an important part of that business.

Today, by mutual agreement of Members on both sides of the aisle, we begin the actual introduction of bills and resolutions. Following tradition, Republicans will introduce the first five bills. Senator DASCHLE will then introduce the following five bills.

Of course, this is an occasion, not just to introduce major legislation, but for both parties to explain to the American people the principles behind their bills, and the values that shape them. That is what I would like to do today.

Today's Americans want the same things our people have always sought. They want a better life for themselves and for their children—better, not just in personal economic or financial terms, but also in terms of their community. They want a healthier environment, and decent neighborhoods where children can play without fear or danger.

They want to be able to plan for their own future, while ensuring for their elders the security they want for themselves.

They want a just social order. That means a society that rewards labor and thrift, punishes those who harm others, and cares for those who cannot care for themselves.

Those goals form the great common ground on which the American people stand united. Whatever our many differences and disagreements, we share a commitment to opportunity, to security, and to personal responsibility.

Put the three of those together—opportunity, security, and responsibility—and you have the formula for freedom.

Freedom, after all, is the one overarching concept for which our country stands. It is what the word "America" has meant from the very beginning—and not only to those who were blessed enough to live here, but also to the millions of people around the world who lived, and often died, in the hope that someday they might share in that freedom.

But freedom is not a negative commodity.

It is not just the absence of oppression that allows every individual to do whatever he or she wants to do. True freedom is a positive force that turns responsibility into a creative energy that can empower individuals, lift their families, and improve their communities.

That is why the starting point for the Senate Republican agenda is freedom. Not as a slogan, but as the sum total of everything the American people, day by day, work for and hope for: broader opportunity, enhanced security, and stronger personal responsibility.

From that starting point come the first five bills of the 106th Congress. They address both educational opportunity and economic opportunity, because the two are really interdependent. And they deal with issues of security—retirement security, community security, and national security—as fulfillments of our ideal of freedom.

Our first bill deals with one of the most pressing concerns of the American people: Social Security. We are strongly committed to preserving and protecting Social Security for future generations.

Many in the Senate, like RICK SANTORUM and JUDD GREGG, have shown great leadership on this issue. We want this bill to carry the symbolic title of S. 1, even though its substance will not be introduced today. We will hold the number for a while. That is a highly unusual procedure, and I should explain why we are using it in this case.

Over the last several weeks, I have repeatedly urged the President to submit to the Congress and the Nation his own bill to save and strengthen Social Security.

I repeated that plea as recently as this weekend, in a joint letter that Speaker HASTERT and I gave the White House. In that letter, the Speaker and I promised to arrange an unprecedented joint meeting of the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee to receive and hold hearings on the President's bill.

I have made clear that, if the President will give us his proposals in legislative form, I will introduce his bill here in the Senate. Today, I pledge to honor the President's bill by introducing it as S. 1.

But first, he must send us his bill. That is the way Presidents do business. It is part of presidential leadership. It is part of his job.

I continue to hope that the job will get done. And as a token of our good faith in the Senate, and our willingness to work in a bipartisan spirit, to make sure that Social Security is there for both our parents and our children, I will withhold introducing of S. 1 and reserve that title for the President's

bill on Social Security. I hope he will send it to us soon.

The second item on the Republican Senate agenda is education.

Here we have a dilemma: an overabundance of great ideas. Starting today, and in the weeks to follow, Republican Senators will be introducing many bills dealing with education. They will all have one common goal: To make sure this country has the world's best schools.

I won't attempt to offer a comprehensive list of those proposals, because there are so many of them. One consistent theme is to shift decision-making out of Washington and back to parents, teachers, and local officials. In short, the folks who know the kids best—and who know what our schools need to succeed.

That's the principle behind Senator BOND's "Direct Check," Senator HUTCHISON's "Options for Excellence," Senator HUTCHINSON's "Dollars to the Classroom," and Senator GORTON's stalwart campaign to renew and empower State and local education systems.

The same principle—that excellence in education begins at the State and local level—has shaped what will be one of the most important bills of the 106th Congress. It's called Ed-Flex, for Educational Flexibility, and it is not a partisan initiative. It has been jointly advanced by Senators FRIST and WYDEN.

It is strongly supported by all the Nation's Governors. It should be something we can consider and pass quickly.

If we want the 106th Congress to be known as the Education Congress, Ed-Flex is a great way to start. Right off the bat, with virtual unanimity, we can give the States the leeway they need to use their share of federal dollars to meet the needs of students. Around this flag, we should all rally.

A second principle of Republican education reform is consumer choice.

We believe that what is right and productive in every other sector of the economy is equally right—and will be equally productive—in schooling. So we renew our commitment to consumer rights and choice in education: whether through Senator COVERDELL's tax-free education savings accounts, or Senator MCCONNELL's expansion of tuition savings plans; or through Senator SESSION's Class Act extending those plans to non-government colleges; or through Senator KYL's plan to provide parents financial breaks to supplement their children's educational needs; or through the Emergency Scholarships and other lifelines we should extend to low-income families.

A third principle of Republican education reform is equality teaching. Senator MACK's bill on teacher testing leads the way in that regard, along with our other proposals for teacher training and merit pay.